In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A hot dip coating apparatus for coating a steel strip wherein the strip is immersed in a bath of coating alloy containing ~~aluminium~~ aluminum, the apparatus including at least one component having a surface that comes into contact with the bath when in use, wherein the component is made from stainless steel containing an appreciable amount of nitrogen distributed substantially uniformly throughout its microstructure.

2. (Currently Amended) [[~~A~~]] The hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the stainless steel contains greater than 0.10wt% of nitrogen.

3. (Currently Amended) [[~~A~~]] The hot dip coating apparatus according to ~~either~~ claim 1[[~~ or 2~~]], wherein the component is a sink roll under which the metal strip is passed.

4. (Currently Amended) [[~~A~~]] The hot dip coating apparatus for coating a steel strip wherein the strip is immersed in a bath of coating alloy containing ~~aluminium~~ aluminum, the apparatus including at least one component having a surface that comes into contact with the bath when in use, wherein the component includes at least one layer made from stainless steel containing an appreciable amount of nitrogen distributed uniformly through it microstructure.

5. (Currently Amended) [[~~A~~]] The hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the stainless steel contains greater than 0.10wt% of nitrogen.

6. (Currently Amended) [[~~A~~]] The hot dip coating apparatus according to ~~claims~~ claim ~~4 or 5~~, wherein the component includes a further layer, and wherein the stainless steel layer containing the nitrogen is disposed between the surface and the further layer.

7. (Currently Amended) [[~~A~~]] The hot dip coating apparatus according to claim [[~~3~~]] 6, wherein the further layer is formed from stainless steel.

8. (Currently Amended) A component for a hot dip coating apparatus ~~according to any preceding claim~~ for coating a steel strip wherein the strip is immersed in a bath of coating alloy containing aluminum, the component having a surface that comes into contact with the bath when in use, and is made at least in part from stainless steel containing an appreciable amount of nitrogen distributed substantially uniformly throughout its microstructure.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a component of a hot dip apparatus for immersing a sheet metal strip in a bath of coating alloy containing ~~aluminium~~ aluminum, wherein the component is formed at least in part from a stainless steel containing an

appreciable amount of nitrogen, the nitrogen being dissolved into the stainless steel [[~~whilst~~]] in a molten state so as to be substantially distributed throughout its microstructure.

10. (Currently Amendedl) A method of coating a steel strip wherein the strip is immersed in a bath of coating alloy containing ~~aluminium~~ aluminum, the method comprising the step of passing the steel strip over a component immersed in the bath, wherein the component is made from stainless steel containing an appreciable amount of nitrogen distributed substantially uniformly through its microstructure.

11. (New) The hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the component is a sink roll under which the metal strip is passed.

12. (New) The hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the component includes a further layer, and wherein the stainless steel layer containing the nitrogen is disposed between the surface and the further layer.

13. (New) The component for a hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the stainless steel contains greater than 0.10wt% of nitrogen.

14. (New) A component for a hot dip coating apparatus for coating a steel strip wherein the strip is immersed in a bath of coating alloy containing aluminum, the component having a surface that comes into contact with the bath when in use, wherein the component includes at least one layer made from stainless steel containing an appreciable amount of nitrogen distributed uniformly through its microstructure.

15. (New) The component for a hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the stainless steel contains greater than 0.10wt% of nitrogen.

16. (New) The component for a hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the component includes a further layer, and wherein the stainless steel layer containing the nitrogen is disposed between the surface and the further layer.

17. (New) The component for a hot dip coating apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the further layer is formed from stainless steel.